



BUDGET WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, May 3, 2004, for the purpose of conferring with representatives of the F.O.P. regarding the proposed FY 2005 budget.

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:04 p.m. It was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Rodney M. Roberts, and Mayor Judith F. Davis. Councilmember Edward V. J. Putens arrived at 8:10 p.m.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: David E. Moran, Assistant to the City Manager; Jeff Williams, City Treasurer; Stephen Robinson, IT Director; Chief Jim Craze, and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Craig Rich, President, John Rogers, Immediate Past President, and Marty Parker, Treasurer, Greenbelt F.O.P.; and Thomas X. White, Greenbelt News Review.

Mr. Rich gave a slide presentation that covered background information on the Greenbelt F.O.P. and highlighted their current areas of concern.

COLA: Their position is that the COLA should be calculated on salary not midpoint of the salary range, since the latter discriminates against more senior employees. The Mayor asked Mr. Williams what the financial implications of the difference were. He said there are essentially none through FY 2005, but thereafter a savings to the City would be realized by using the midpoint. Mr. Putens expressed surprise that this method was being employed, but Mr. Williams said Council had so directed. Council asked to have more information on this policy and the financial implications prior to the final budget work session.

Buy-Back Leave Policy Reduction: The F.O.P. opposes any reduction of benefits at this time. Mr. Rich asked whether the program was serving its purpose of discouraging over-use of sick leave. He said the F.O.P. believed that it was and should be retained. The Mayor remarked that Council had heard this objection from others as well.

Pay-Scale Review: In response to a question, Mr. Rich clarified that the salaries on his slide represented starting salaries, which are generally the point of reference for recruiting purposes. He said that while Greenbelt had raised salaries in response to the compensation study that was implemented in 2001, other jurisdictions had, in the meantime, continued to raise theirs. He said the F.O.P. was simply asking for a review of the matter. Mr. Putens and Mayor Davis both asked about comparative information on benefits packages and pointed out that comparing salaries did not reveal the whole story. Mr. Herling asked how the department was doing on retaining staff. Mr. Rich replied that the City was doing well on retention.

Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) in Cruisers: Mr. Rich said they were concerned that the computers were still not installed in the police cars. He said some were 19 months old, still in their boxes, with their warranties expired. Mr. Roberts asked why, and Mr. Putens asked how many. Mr. Williams said there were about 50 computers and that staff from both IT and the Police Department were doing the best they could but that new problems kept arising, primarily involving compatibility issues, and that staff resources and time were limited. Mr. Putens said this was a waste of resources and a safety issue. He and Mayor Davis both expressed concern that Council had not been informed of this problem, which they considered to be a major one. Mr. Moran said staff would get a report to Council on the matter.

Health Insurance: The F.O.P. is looking for a change in benefits for two situations: continuation of benefits for a police officer who receives a catastrophic injury in the line of duty; and continuation of health benefits for a year for the family of an officer who dies in the line of duty. There was discussion of exactly what type of disability insurance is provided for employees, and Council asked to have more information about this.

Health Insurance for Retired Members: Mr. Rich said the F.O.P. will be looking at the proposed ICMA program as part of this issue. He estimated it would take about eight months for them to complete their review. They will bring it up with the next budget cycle.

Collective Bargaining Update: Mr. Rich said they are ready to discuss this topic with Council, and it was agreed to schedule a work session as early as possible in September. Mayor Davis said it would be useful to see copies of other organizations' contracts. She asked if any other force in Prince George's County had collective bargaining, and Mr. Rogers said no.

Other Business

Mr. Moran distributed copies of a letter from Norman Rivera that was delivered today and which identified the annexation issue as being the one that was a deal-breaker for the Greenbelt Station developers. After some debate on whether the City should respond or not, Council agreed that staff should look at the letter to see whether there were misstatements that were significant to correct for the benefit of the individuals who had been copied; if so, response from the City Solicitor might be in order.

Mayor Davis reported there is a new management company at Charlestowne North.

Mayor Davis asked staff to provide clarification on the current requirements of APF school legislation regarding the issuance of permits in areas where schools are more than 110% over capacity. She said she believed some of the City's positions regarding Greenbelt Station may have been based on incorrect assumptions.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Gallagher
City Clerk